

S-97
Mercantile Building
Princess Anne
private

c. 1847-1848

This two-story gable front frame store is an important remnant of the antebellum commercial buildings that once defined Princess Anne. Echoing the pedimented facade of several prominent dwellings, the Federal/Greek Revival rectangular, temple front structure suited the narrow town lot and at the same time provided a handsome street elevation. Aside from an altered first floor, few changes have been made to the exterior. Flush board sheathing remains within the pediment and a pair of period shutters survive on the south wall window. Rising through the roof is a brick chimney finished with a dentiled cap.

Credit for the construction of this commercial building is attributed to Littleton Long, who purchased the property in November of 1847 for \$300 (WP 2/296). The deed was executed between John W. Crisfield and Littleton Long. The description includes an exception that provided Crisfield access to his law office and the four-foot alley on the north side of the building. On first impression it would seem reasonable that this clause was referring to the extant building; however, later deeds infer that the temple front store replaced an earlier set of buildings. Eleven years later, the same lot was purchased by Sydney C. Long for \$1200 (LW 5 /560), an increase in lot value that suggests the construction of a substantial improvement. The deed mentions, "the Store House and lot of ground thereto belonging situate in Princess Anne Town opposite the Washington Hotel." A year later, John W. Crisfield purchased the same property from Sydney C. Long for an identical amount (LW 6/314). Subsequent deeds refer specifically to this building as the law office occupied by John W. Crisfield.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. S-97

Magi No. 2000975411

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Crisfield Law Office

and/or common Mercantile Building

2. Location

street & number North Somerset Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Princess Anne ___ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Somerset

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	<u>X</u> occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	___ unoccupied	<u>X</u> commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	<u>X</u> yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	<u>X</u> not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Logan Widdowson

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Princess Anne state and zip code Md. 21853

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset Clerk of Court liber

street & number Somerset County Courthouse folio

city, town Princess Anne state Md. 21853

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. S-97

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Mercantile building description

The Mercantile building (also known as the John W. Crisfield law office) stands on the east side of South Somerset Avenue in the center business district of Princess Anne, Somerset County, Maryland. The two-story gable front building faces west with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis.

Built around 1840-1850, the weatherboard frame store building is supported by an excavated common brick cellar and sheathed with weatherboards. The medium sloped roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Rising from the center of the building is a brick chimney finished with a dentiled and corbelled cap.

The west (main) elevation consists of an altered storefront of plate glass display windows and a recessed entrance. The second floor is marked by three evenly spaced six-over-six sash windows. The gable front pediment distinguishes the gable end and the tympanum is sheathed with flush boards. The eaves are trimmed with a mid nineteenth century crown molding.

The south side of the building borders an alley so the side facade is fully exposed weatherboard wall. Both the first and second floors are marked by two six-over-six sash windows. The west window retains a pair of raised panel shutters with a Greek style inset molding around each of the six panels.

The north side of the building is largely covered by the adjacent law office. Six-over-six sash windows are located on each floor. The rear elevation has a flush gable end, and a combination of six-over-six sash windows and a rear door punctuate the first and second floors.

Inside, the first floor level has been lowered so there is no longer full head room in the excavated cellar. Brick paving remains on the floor. The first floor is divided by interior partitions into a side hall to the north and commercial space to the south. The original stair rises in the northeast corner to a partitioned second floor. The second floor is finished in a modest manner with plaster walls and simple mid nineteenth century trim.

8. Significance

Survey No. S-97

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Mercantile building is one of the few antebellum store buildings to survive in Princess Anne. Aside from an altered storefront, the exterior remains in^{an} untouched condition. The classical pediment was a popular feature for Federal and Greek Revival buildings in Princess Anne, and the rectangular store with a gable front roof suited the narrow town lot. The flush board sheathing within the pediment was a standard treatment.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. S-97

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Touart- Architechural Historian

organization Somerset County Historical Trust date 6/29/86

street & number 424 N. Somerset Ave telephone 651-0077

city or town Princess Anne state Md. 21853

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

STATE **Maryland**
COUNTY **Somerset**
TOWN **Princess Anne** VICINITY
STREET NO. **N Somerset Ave.**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
INVENTORY **S- 97**

ORIGINAL OWNER
ORIGINAL USE
PRESENT OWNER **Testerman's Jewelry**
PRESENT USE **commercial**
WALL CONSTRUCTION **frame**
NO. OF STORIES **2**

2. NAME **Testerman's Jewelry**
DATE OR PERIOD **c. 1810-20**
STYLE **Federal**
ARCHITECT
BUILDER

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION

OPEN TO PUBLIC **yes**

Testermans Jewelry is almost identical to 217 Prince William St. in Princess Anne. It is a two story frame building on a brick foundation, three bays wide and two deep. It has a gable facade, but since it is a commercial building, the first story has been covered with a glossy composition, and large plate glass windows have been installed. The three original windows above remain as does the plain gable pediment. On the south side, one pair of original three-panel shutters remain and there is an iron bar grill over the other window. One wide brick chimney pierces the center of the 'A' roof.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE

Endangered **no**

Interior

Exterior **good**



6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

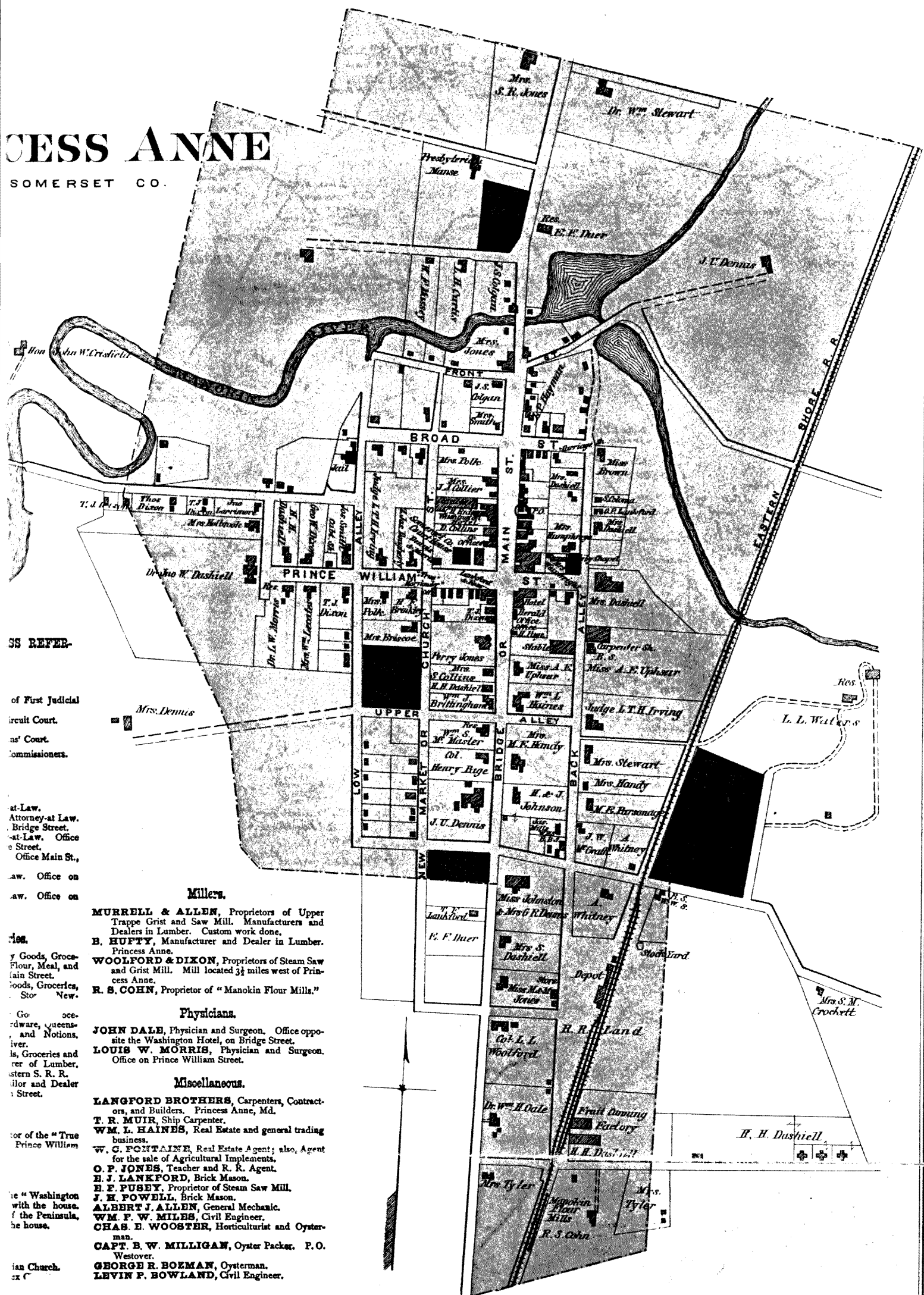
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
Michael Bourne
Maryland Historical Trust

DATE OF RECORD **6/29/72**

PRINCESS ANNE

SOMERSET CO.



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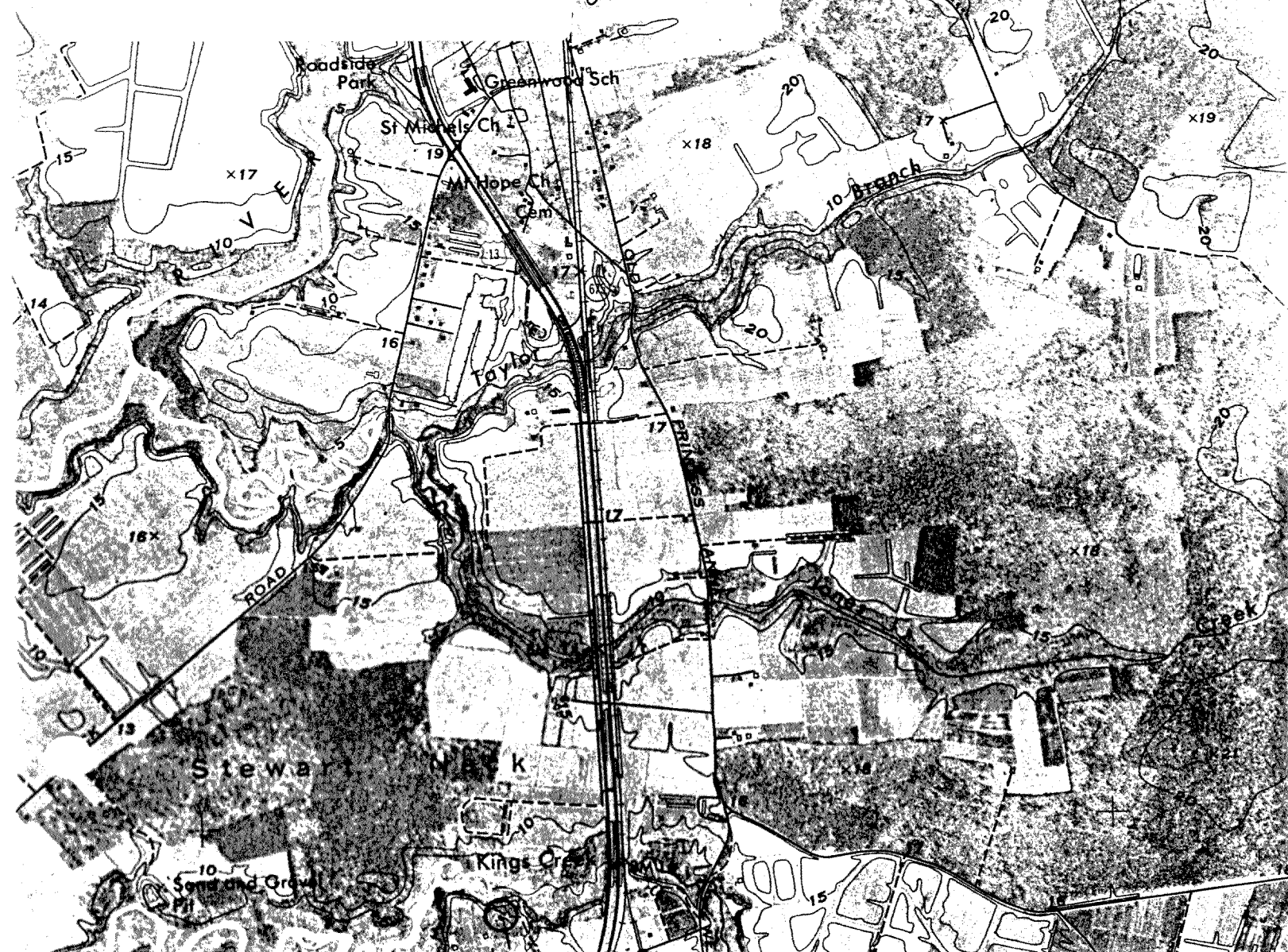
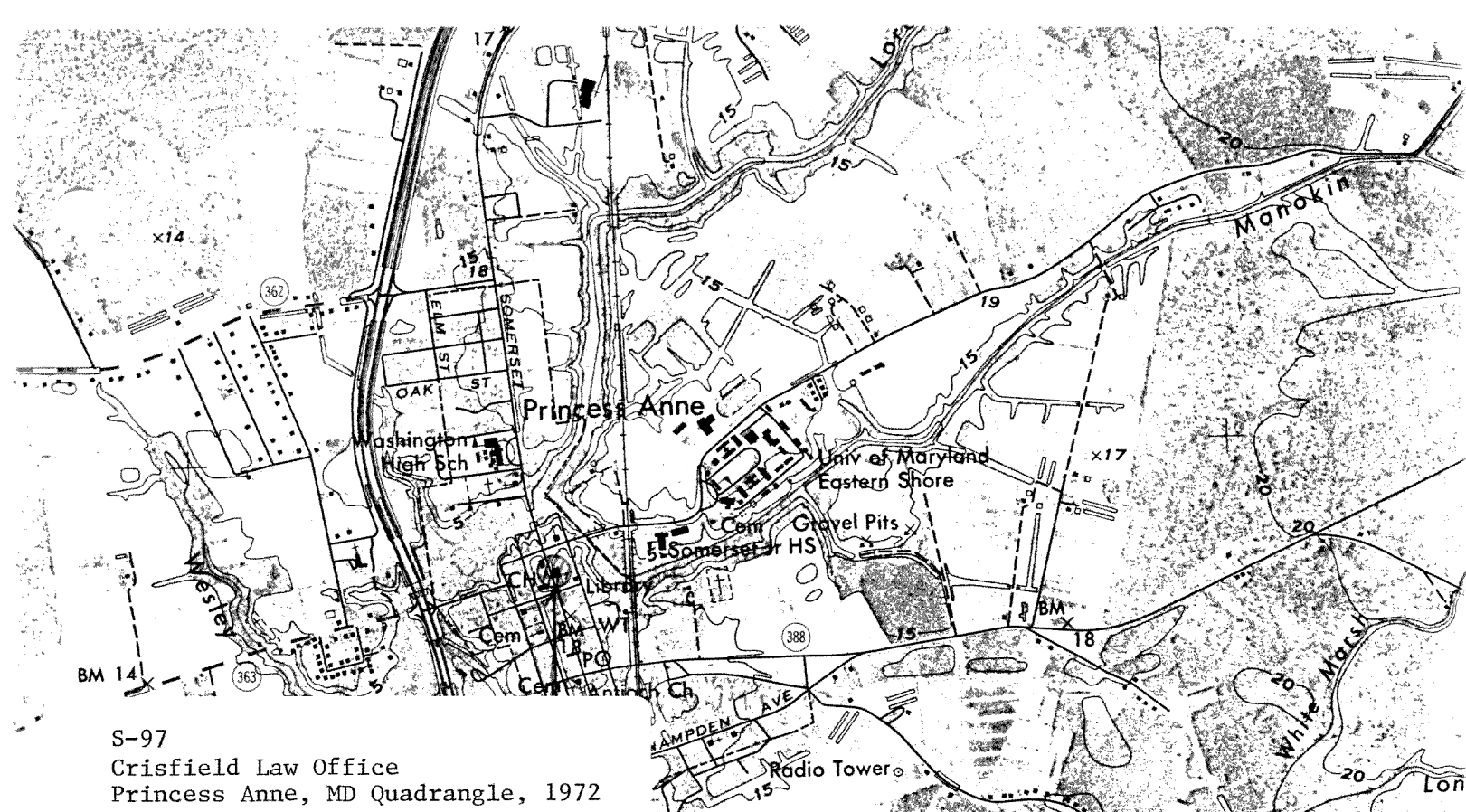
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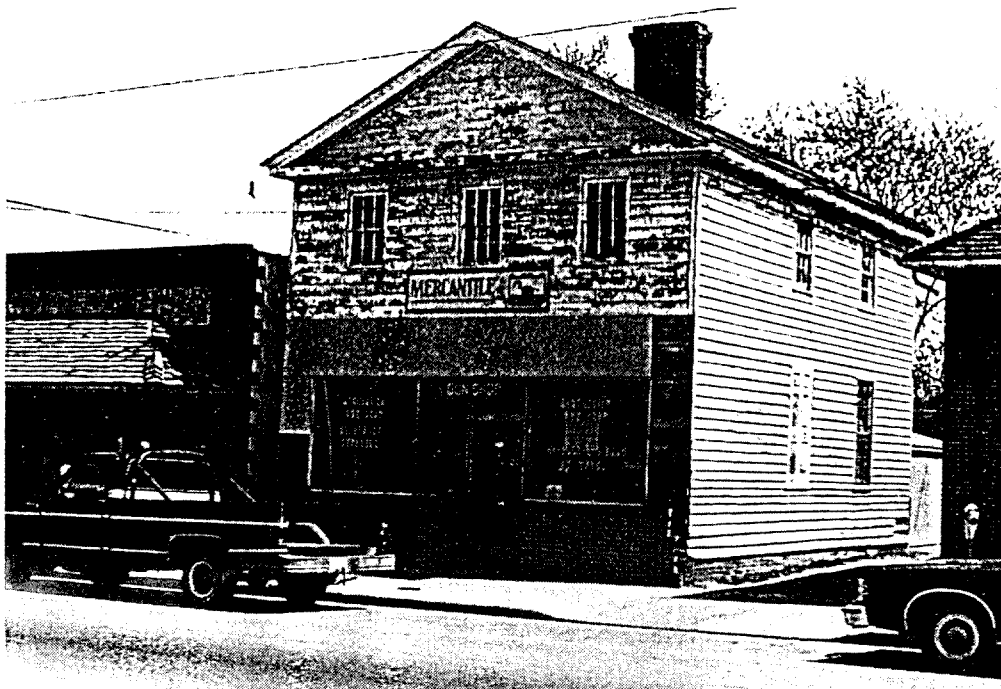
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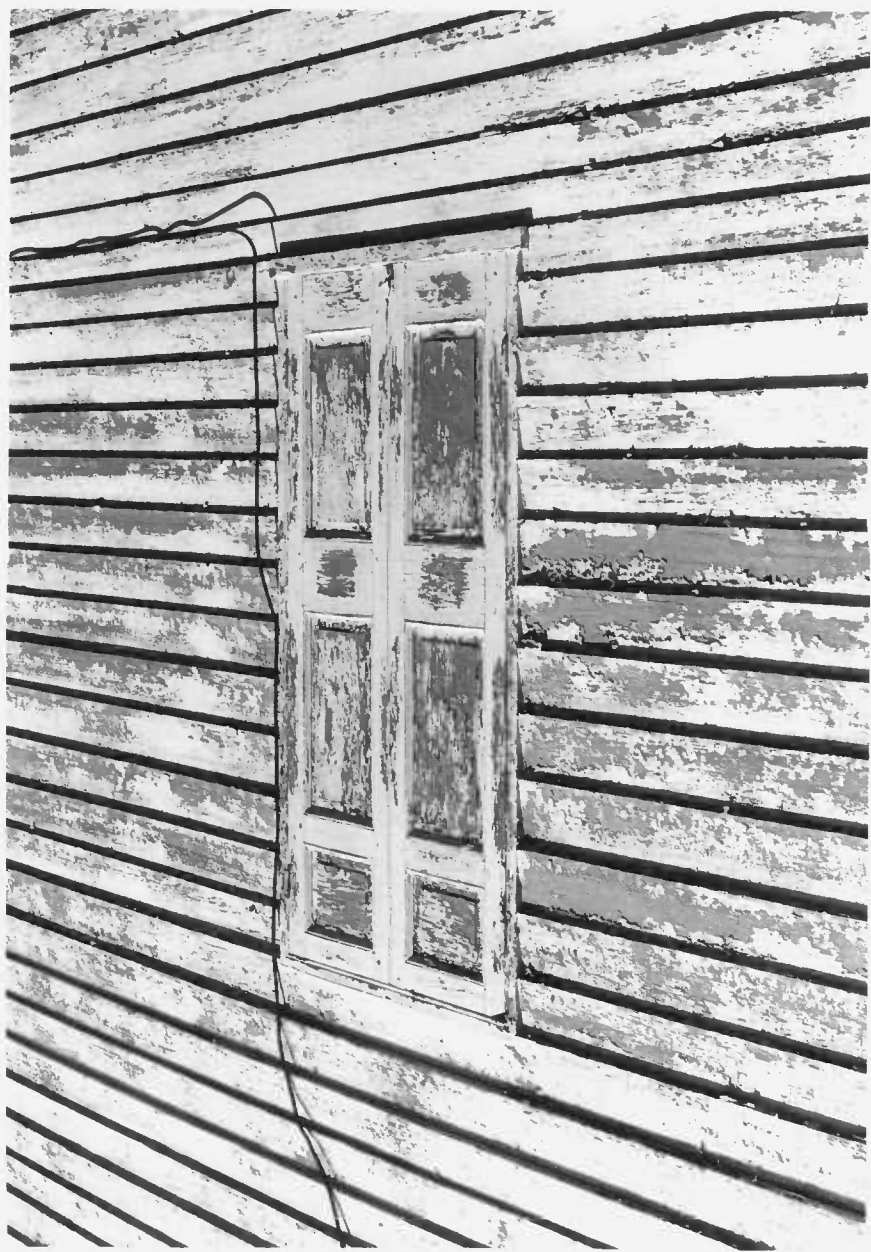
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- Millers.**
- MURRELL & ALLEN**, Proprietors of Upper Trappe Grist and Saw Mill. Manufacturers and Dealers in Lumber. Custom work done.
- B. HUFTY**, Manufacturer and Dealer in Lumber. Princess Anne.
- WOOLFORD & DIXON**, Proprietors of Steam Saw and Grist Mill. Mill located $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Princess Anne.
- R. S. COHN**, Proprietor of "Manokin Flour Mills."
- Physicians.**
- JOHN DALE**, Physician and Surgeon. Office opposite the Washington Hotel, on Bridge Street.
- LOUIS W. MORRIS**, Physician and Surgeon. Office on Prince William Street.
- Miscellaneous.**
- LANGFORD BROTHERS**, Carpenters, Contractors, and Builders. Princess Anne, Md.
- T. R. MUIR**, Ship Carpenter.
- WM. L. HAINES**, Real Estate and general trading business.
- W. C. FONTAINE**, Real Estate Agent; also, Agent for the sale of Agricultural Implements.
- O. P. JONES**, Teacher and R. R. Agent.
- E. J. LANKFORD**, Brick Mason.
- E. F. PUSEY**, Proprietor of Steam Saw Mill.
- J. H. POWELL**, Brick Mason.
- ALBERT J. ALLEN**, General Mechanic.
- WM. F. W. MILLS**, Civil Engineer.
- CHAS. E. WOOSTER**, Horticulturist and Oysterman.
- CAPT. B. W. MILLIGAN**, Oyster Packer. P. O. Westover.
- GEORGE R. BOZMAN**, Oysterman.
- LEVIN P. BOWLAND**, Civil Engineer.





S-97. John W. Crisfield law office, southwest elevation.



Crisfield Law Office
Princess Anne, Somerset Co., Md.
Shuttered Window
5/86, Paul Touart, Photographer
Neg./Md. Historical Trust

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